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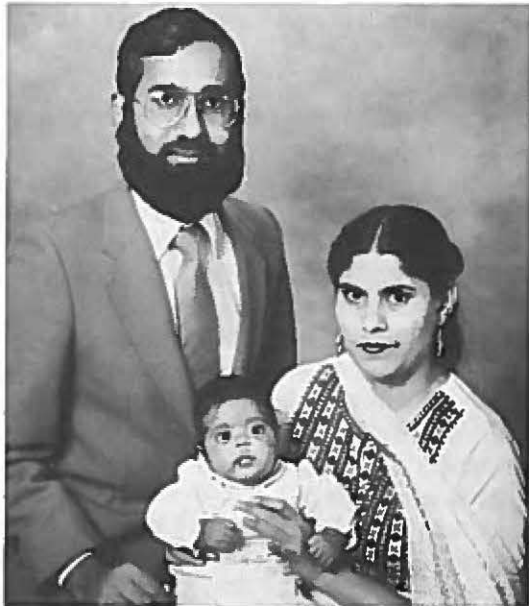
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International Message

Diplomatic Dialogue

by Sunny Evans



Karachi, Pakistan, is home to LT Sarfraz Hussain, his wife Zakia, and their beautiful infant daughter, Maliha. LT Hussain is one of four Pakistani naval officers attending NPS. He and his wife have been in Monterey for approximately one year, a year highlighted four months ago by the birth of their first child. LT Hussain is studying electrical engineering, and, in addition to his status as a student at NPS, he is also one of two prayer leaders to the Muslim student body at NPS.

How has Pakistan been affected by the Russian invasion of Afghanistan?

The biggest effect is that the Pakistanis feel highly insecure. They have doubts about their survival. Strategically, Afghanistan is not that important. Pakistan and Iran are strategically important because they are close to the Strait of Hormuz, and the Strait of Hormuz is the gateway for the supply of oil to the west and to Japan. Pakistanis feel that the invasion of Afghanistan is the first step towards reaching the Strait of Hormuz and gaining control of that key position.

Pakistanis feel that it is only a matter of time before they invade Pakistan or Iran. The Russians normally take 10 to 12 years in invading one country after another. It is the resistance in Afghanistan that has slightly slowed the Russians down. As soon as Russia has obtained a foothold in Afghanistan, either Iran or Pakistan will be next. Besides that, the problem is that there are now about three million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. There is aid coming in from the United Nations, the Red Cross, and some other sources.

Have you spoken personally with any Afghan refugees and will you discuss what you have learned?

Yes. Those who have come to Pakistan are against the Russians. My observations after speaking to them is that they are determined to push the Russians out of their country. They say that if they are not able to do it, the generations after them will do it. They are very proud in saying that. Afghanistan was, I think, the only country in the region the British could not gain control over. The Afghanists are good fighters. The only handicap with them is

that they are not familiar with modern warfare. With time, experience, and training, they might succeed.

What is your past experience in the Navy?

Basically, I am an electrical engineer, and I have served onboard ships. My duties included the maintenance of electrical and electronic equipment onboard ships. Just before coming to NPS, I was an instructor at our Naval Academy, teaching electrical engineering and electronics. I have served onboard destroyers and Chinese submarine chasers.

Do you have any American ships in your Navy?

Yes. We have six ex-Gearing class destroyers.

Where have you been stationed?

I was in Britain for one year and the remainder of the time in Karachi.

Where did you get your information about NPS and Monterey before you arrived?

I received information only from Pakistani students who were here.

How did you become a prayer leader to the Muslim community at NPS?

No one else was willing to lead the prayers, and a friend proposed that I do it. To lead the prayers, one must be chosen by the others to do so. He must not seek to do it on his own. Someone had to lead the prayers, so I agreed to do it. An Egyptian friend is also leading prayers.

Do you have any formal religious training?

No, I do not have any formal religious training. In Islam, everybody must be capable of leading the prayer.

Where and when are the religious services held for the Muslim students?

They are held in the Catholic Chapel at NPS on Fridays. The afternoon session is at 1:00 p.m., and the evening session is at 7:00 p.m. About 40 to 50

students attend the afternoon session which is the main congregational prayer. The evening session is an educational type of session. We have religious lessons. The attendance at the evening session is usually less than that of the afternoon.

What countries are represented by the Muslim students at NPS?

The countries represented at NPS are Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Turkey, and Morocco.

Are the Islamic punishments for crime strictly adhered to in Pakistan?

In my country, the Islamic punishments are not in practice one hundred percent, but, slowly and gradually, we are moving towards total Islamization of the society. In Islam, the punishments are very severe, but the punishments cannot be awarded unless the government creates an environment in which the people are not attracted to commit crimes to fulfill their needs. For example, if poverty or joblessness

exists in the country and a person suffering from it commits theft, then he is not to be amputated (the Islamic punishment for thieves). Besides that, a man cannot be punished unless three eyewitnesses are available; and, for some crimes such as murder, there is a provision to escape execution by paying the compensation asked for by the relatives of the person murdered. Also, if the affected party pardons the accused, the State does not have the right to continue the prosecution.

Was your wife employed in Pakistan?

Yes. She was a statistical officer for the government.

What does the average person in Pakistan believe life in the United States is like?

The average person believes that life in the United States is full of luxuries and very charming. All the impressions they get about the United States are from American movies. They think the

common man in the United States has a jet-set lifestyle.

What types of American movies have been popular in Pakistan?

About 15 to 20 years back, American war movies were very popular. Then, the movies showing the comforts of life and the jet set became popular. For some time, the James Bond movies were also popular. Dr. Zhivago was also a favorite.

Is there anything in particular you would like known about Pakistan?

Yes. In the United States, the problem of drugs is very common. The people are fighting against it. Pakistan is one of the countries where the drugs are produced. I would like the people of the United States to know that we are also the victims of this disease. Drug addiction and abuse is a serious problem in our country. Besides caring for the addicts, we are doing our best to stop the production and trafficking of drugs. ☐



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